

August 3, 1999

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1178 '99 AUG -9 19:44

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing regarding docket numbers **98N-1230; 96P-0418; 97P-0197**. Each year the U.S. egg industry force-molts—intentionally starves for up to 14 days—millions of hens to manipulate egg production. Forced molting is so stressful it destroys the hens' immune systems, predisposing the birds and their eggs to salmonella poison. Many illnesses and deaths are caused by contaminated eggs.

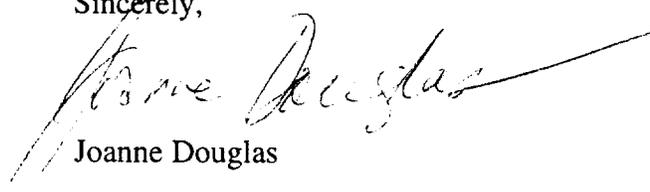
I am requesting that the FDA do more than place bacteria warning labels on egg cartons and regulate refrigeration temperatures. The FDA should prohibit the practice of forced molting because forced molting has been scientifically shown to promote disease by destroying the starving hens' immune systems.

Because the FDA has the jurisdiction to ban farm practices such as forced molting, which injures human health, it should do so. The FDA must ban the forced molting of laying hens because forced molting is a primary cause of infectious diseases in hens, eggs and consumers of eggs. The cruelty and contamination are linked!

The FDA was petitioned in April 1998 to ban forced molting. This petition should be granted without further delay. Chickens are as worthy of moral and ethical consideration as a cat or a dog. Imagine the public outcry there would be if dogs and cats in this country were starved en masse?!

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Joanne Douglas

96P-0418

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CROSS FILE SHEET

File Number: 98N-1230/ C86

See File Number: 97P-0197/ C87

96P 0418/ C86